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Virginia Maud's Birthday Party.

By
Prescott Bailey Bull,
With Illustrations by
Eleanor Withey Willard.

Published by
The Michigan Trust Co.,
Grand Rapids.
Christmas,
1896.

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**VALLEY CITY ENGRAVING & PRINTING COMPANY
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.**

To our Friends:

A year ago we presented you with the CHILDREN'S SINGING GAMES, and thereby made happy a great many people, young and old. In fact, the call for the SINGING GAMES from all parts of the country was so great that we abandoned the attempt to supply the demand and turned the book over to the F. A. Stokes Co., of New York, who will hereafter supply it to the trade. The cordial reception given to our first publication has induced us to make another venture in children's literature.

So much that is written for very young children nowadays, seems to us altogether unsuitable. The stories are rarely within the range of their vocabulary, or the instructive motive supersedes the interest of the narrative, while they almost always appeal to the sympathies rather than to the sense of humor. This lacrymose literature takes a

large place in all that appears for children, and often bears the names of the best and most favorably known writers of children's books.

We are happy to be able to present you this year with what seems to us quite an ideal child's story, and we feel confident that Virginia Maud will receive a welcome as warm as that accorded to the little lads and lassies of the SINGING GAMES.

With many wishes for a merry Christmas,

Very truly yours,

The Michigan Trust Co.

**Christmas,
1896.**

Virginia Maud's Birthday Party.

LITTLE MISTRESS MARTHA came running in to her mamma. "Oh Mamma, my dolls are so restless that I cannot stay with them in the playroom. It will be Virginia Maud's birthday next Thursday, and all the dolls want to give a party for her.

Martha looked hard at her mother, who smiled and said she thought Martha was saying two words for herself and one for the dolls; whereupon Martha only said in a coaxing tone, "Well, let's have the party anyway." "But," she added hurriedly, "they have no table manners and scarcely any clothes." Her mamma answered, "We can teach them table manners, and can make them clothes."

Then mamma and Martha went together up to the playroom to look over the dolls' wardrobe. They found that Virginia Maud had a pale blue dress with a Watteau plait that needed only pressing, but Jessie Adelaide had

nothing but a Scotch plaid skirt and a blue shirt waist with a peach stain on the front.

Mollie Caudelia Margaretta's best dress could not be found. Martha said severely that Mollie Caudelia must have hidden it in order to have a new one for the party.

Ada Carolina Katrina had a skirt trimmed with jet that would look sweet with a new fancy waist.

The boy dolls all had their clothes knit right onto them, which was a great convenience.

The baby-doll's clothes were all in order, and anyway, she (her name was Spotty Lucretia, for a pet dog and a maiden aunt) would be left in the nursery with the nurse-maid; but she was to receive a new red ball to celebrate the day and make her happy.

The colored acrobat doll was to wait on table, but Mamma said that she did not think that possible, because whenever he moved he turned a somersault, and that would be quite awkward when he was passing things. Martha then said that he could perform for the guests after supper, as she would not like to hurt his feelings by leaving him out, and she would ask Anna Marietta



"Martha said she would paste on a piece of her new pen-wiper."

to be waitress, because she had a clean gingham dress. Martha took Anna Marietta one side, and after whispering to her for a moment, came back saying that Anna Marietta felt honored by being asked to help.

Martha reviewed the tin soldiers and found them in good order, though one had lost his epaulets; but Martha said she would paste on a piece of her new pen-wiper. Another soldier had lost a leg, but he could be propped up with a pencil, and could stand on guard during supper. Her mother remarked that soldiers with wooden legs were exempt from duty; then Martha thought that he could take tickets at the door like the man at Ye Olde Folkes' Concert. Her mother explained to her that tickets were not sold for parties, but that invitations were sent, and when the guests came they dropped their cards onto a tray at the door.

"Oh," cried Martha, clapping her hands, "we must have Sambo wait on door!" But her face fell as she remembered that Sambo had been lost for three days, and she ran away to look for him. She was gone some time and finally came back with Sambo; she held him



"She held him up in a sorrowful manner."

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up in a sorrowful manner, and her mother laughed heartily, for one-half of his face was white. Martha was almost in tears as she explained that the new dog, Stonewall Jackson, had licked the complexion off Sambo's left cheek. "But," she continued, more cheerfully, "he can turn his right side toward the door and the vestibule can be real dim."

"To go back," said her mother, "I don't see why you want soldiers on guard at a party, unless you are afraid that the guests will steal the spoons. Of course, you will invite only nice people—I mean nice dolls."

"Well," said Martha, "this will be a sort of military party. I shall drape the flag on the sideboard to make it seem natural for the soldiers."

Martha decided to invite the little Snow girls' dolls who lived next door, and May Murray and her dolls, for of course the little mothers had to come to see that the dolls behaved properly.

Martha thought that Virginia Maud ought to write the invitations, as the party was to be in her honor; so Mamma said, "We will leave the little sheets of paper and the envelopes in the play-room tonight to give

Maud

her plenty of time, and doubtless the invitations will be all written in the morning." Martha thought that a good idea, and went to bed very happy. Sure enough, in the morning the invitations were all written so neatly that Martha praised Virginia Maud highly, but added that she thought that Jessie Adelaide must have helped a little, as there were ink stains on her fingers.

The invitations looked like this:

*The Misses Dolly Snow,
Play Street,
Dollville.*

*Miss Virginia Maud Stratton
requests the pleasure of
your company
Thursday afternoon, July
twentieth, at three o'clock.
665 Berry Street, Dollville.*

A similar invitation was directed to the Misses Dolly Murray.

Martha's brother Fred offered to leave the invitations on his way to the bank. Martha thanked him, and then hurried right away to help her mamma sew on the necessary dresses for the dolls.

After a time her fingers smarted so from the pricks the needle had given them that she thought she would better go and drill the dolls in table-manners. She went to the playroom and set the table with her own little dishes, and would you believe it, those dolls never offered to help! The appearance of the table was enough to make any doll feel hungry; the little cloth was snowy white and the crease was exactly in the middle; at every place were knife and fork laid the width of the plate apart, the knife at the right with the sharp edge toward the plate, the fork at the left with the tines turned up. The glass was at the end of the knife, the butter-plate at the end of the fork. In fact, every detail was carefully attended to, and in the center of the table was a vase of flowers from Martha's own garden. There was no food, to be sure, because Martha said that this was only a drill, and she feared that food would take the dolls' attention.



"Martha stood Anna Marietta up, and told her to say, 'Supper is served.' "

When the table was ready Martha stood Anna Marietta up with a tray in her little kid hand, and told her to say "Supper is served." Anna Marietta did not get the last word right, but Martha thought it would do for the first time.

Martha seated her little family around the table, and told them just how to behave at what she called a "passed around" supper, like what Mamma had when Aunty was there. She told her mother afterwards that they did pretty well, except that Virginia Maud herself left her spoon sticking up in her cup, and the boy dolls would clutch their spoons by the end of the handle, as if they intended to use them for shovels.

She lectured them all well and told them as a final warning that if she caught any of them passing across the table at the party they would get no ice-cream.

After the "rehearsal," as Martha called it, she sank exhausted into her little rocking-chair, for "twaining children" was such hard work, though she would not "be without them for anything." Just then her mother came into the play-room with the dresses all finished, and Martha at once revived enough to try them all onto the dolls.

The next day, the day of the party, dawned bright and clear, as the story-books say.

The little Snow girls came with their dolls at half-past one, which surprised Mrs. Stratton, as they were not invited until three. Mrs. Snow explained to her afterwards that they were all ready at eleven, and insisted that the dolls would be uncomfortable sitting with their hoods on, which was quite possible, as it was midsummer.

Martha had been equally prompt in making her arrangements. Sambo stood at the door, tray in hand, with his white cheek turned discreetly away. The dolls were all dressed, and stood or sat in graceful positions in the reception room. Lucy and Mildred took their dolls around and introduced them to the Strattons, who bowed as low as the stiffness of their respective bodies would allow. Conversation was then carried on in an elegant and languid manner.

Jessie Adelaide (who was really Mrs. Alphonso Montmorency Pettingill, having been married a long time before to the biggest boy doll) remarked to Mrs. Sophronia Snow, "I suppose that your little boy goes

to kindergarten." "Oh, no," replied Mrs. Sophronia, with a shudder, "the doctor says that he is such a peculiar child that he must not be allowed to think before he is six at least." She in turn asked Mrs. Jessie if she had good help, and was informed that at present Mrs. Jessie had an excellent cook who had been with her for eleven days, so that she felt much encouraged.

Meantime, some of the younger dolls were talking about the last symphony concert, and one whispered to her neighbor that she had found a new dressmaker, so stylish.

Mary Murray was so afraid that she would not be polite that she did not come till four; she said that her mamma gave a *deception* and invited the people at eight, but that the best-dressed ones did not come till ten.

Martha could hardly wait for the late arrivals to serve supper, which she said was the "most principal thing at a party," and she greeted May with "O! come right in to supper; howdy do?"

It took a long time to get the dolls seated at the



"She held a bottle of shoe-blacking to Sophronia's nose and bandaged her hand."

tables, and just as they were ready to pass things Martha noticed that Ada Carolina Katrina, who had on a crimson dress, was sitting next to a boy doll with a red waistcoat, and they had to re-arrange everybody. They were ready to begin again when the soldier, who was propped up with a pencil, fell down with his head right into the butter. Martha said that it did not matter much, because when the butter was rubbed off it left him nice and shiny.

One unfortunate thing happened. In trying to pull off Mrs. Sophronia's glove, Mildred took off her kid skin also, and the cotton oozed out in a shocking manner. Mary, whose father is a doctor, said that they must staunch it at once or Sophronia would faint. She held a bottle of shoe-blacking to Sophronia's nose and bandaged her hand, though of course it was still very painful.

Supper was finally served, and such an appetite as those dolls had! Scarcely a thing was left for Virginia Maud to warm over next day. Everything passed off well, except, as Martha confided to her mother, Felicia

Jane Murray called for ice-cream right in the middle, and two boy dolls put so much cake into their pockets that they looked like ponies with saddle bags.

After supper the acrobat doll performed, Martha's trick kitten jumped through a hoop, and Mamma played for the little girls to dance. Papa and brother Fred came home early and danced too; they took the big dolls by their properly gloved hands, and whirled them around till Mollie Caudelia's blue glass beads danced right off the string and flew all around the room, and Martha thought that they would all be dizzy.

May Murray said that they really must hear her Althusia's regrets, they were "composed so beautiful." She said that Althusia had been finished at a boarding-school. Mary ran out and took the regrets from the card tray. Mr. Stratton read them aloud for the benefit of the company. They sounded so well that some of Mildred Snow's dolls were jealous because they had not staid at home and sent regrets.

This is the way they read:

"Miss Althusia Murray regrets exceedingly that, owing to a slight indisposition, she cannot accept Miss



"Lucy and Martha had a long whispered conversation in the hall."

Virginia Maud Stratton's kind invitation for Thursday afternoon, July twentieth.

772 Melville Avenue,
Dollville."

Down in one corner, in a little cramped hand, was written, "Her hed is off and that is why she Kan't Kum," but Mr. Stratton did not read that. Brother Fred applauded the regrets and Mary felt very proud of Althusia's scholarship.

The little guests were obliged to go home at last. Lucy and Martha had a long whispered conversation in the hall, and when Lucy went home she carried Virginia Maud with her and left behind Victoria Israella with real done-up hair. Martha said that she should go over early the next morning to see if Virginia Maud was homesick, for she would not have her suffer in a strange country; but if she could be happy, she thought travel would be good for her.

When the family went in to supper Martha did not care for any, "for someway, overseeing the dolls' supper" had taken away her appetite.

Lucy and Mildred have since told Martha that their dolls never tire of talking of the party, and that they particularly want Virginia Maud's rule for pink frosting, as they hope some day to give a party themselves, or at least to be "at home" to their friends.



The Michigan Trust Company, GRAND RAPIDS.

Capital	\$200,000.00
Surplus	100,000.00
Deposit with State Treasurer	100,000.00

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